Forest Fusion
CONTEMPLATING NATURE IN THE CITY

Architect Bob Swain loves to hike the peaks of Washington's Cascade mountains, and he has brought the range's rugged aesthetic to his urban garden. When Swain began the redesign, the garden was no more than a concrete driveway and a few overgrown shrubs and trees. Now, mountain hemlocks skirted with native plantings conceal the garden from the street and remind him of Northwest alpine forests. A walkway of cedar planks leads past Douglas fir, quaking aspen, and bamboo to a meadowlike clearing planted with wildflowers such as bleeding heart (Dicentra formosa) and trillium. Hunks of granite salvaged from a Chinese village lead through carpets of salal and pave a quiet seating area. Native

frens and rhododendron (R. macrophyllum) soften the stone and clothe the patio in green.

Asian elements and artifacts fit harmoniously into the natural-looking garden, adding style and an air of timelessness. An upright Buddha stone and Japanese-style water basin and fountain set the tone as you walk toward the meditation wing of the house (converted from an old garage). A sliding glass panel reveals an indoor-outdoor shower. Giant timber bamboo and slatted cedar screens create both privacy and an atmosphere of leafy sanctuary on this transformed city property.
Found materials can be put to new use in the garden. A hefty block of granite topped with glass makes a fine table for a patio paved with equally substantial granite slabs.

Incorporating a few seaside treasures helped Carole McElwee to create this charming seating area. A set of rustic chairs and a table are fashioned out of bent branches; the table holds an urn covered with shells.

Shelly Cogliozzi created this cozy hilltop sitting area for her Lafayette, California, garden. A casual rattan swing dangles from a steel arbor, and oversize cushions complement the rusty patina of the metal.

In the garden of Martha Sturdy in Pemberton, B.C., a large outdoor terrace is furnished for lounging no matter the weather. Comfortable chairs, chaises, and benches are all amply supplied with cushions.